1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

bunk, besides a cook stove and an airtight heater. In Lower Post, houses often contain single cots acquired from construction camps along the Alaska Highway. At least one family in each settlement usually owns a radio which is not, however, always in working order. Shelves consist of wooden packing boxes nailed with their backs to the log walls. Food, clothing, and other equipment is piled on the floor, stored under bunks, or suspended from poles stretching across the width of a cabin.

Away from Lower Post practically all furniture is locally manufactured out of hand hewed poplar or whipsawed spruce. Besides benches, spruce tree sections, ten or twelve inches in diameter and eighteen inches high, also serve as seats.

A cabin or camp often presents an untidy picture of a great many articles stored in any available space. Old Kean's tent frame presented an extreme picture of disorder. Here the tables were littered with tins of jam, butter, syrup, half used packages of macaroni, and other food left over from several meals. Food was stored under the tables and even in the center of the floor. The bunks were piled with guns, clothing, tarps, and miscellaneous objects.

Griffin has described the interior and furnishings of one of the older cabins in Lower Post (perhaps Mrs. Dickson's house) as he saw it during April 1943. "... we go into one of the cabins, stooping to pass the low doorway and straining our eyes in the dim light. Beyond a bed in one corner and a stove in another there is little in the place. The woman sitting on the bed regards us apathetically, but the eyes of the boy beside her are bright and full of curiosity. Two men are bent over some pelts laid out on the floor, marten and lynx. Hudson asks them what the trapping was like this winter and one of them replies laconically, "No good. Too cold."[1]

In summer, bedding consists of a single sleeping bag or a pair of heavy woolen blankets. In winter a second sleeping bag may be used or additional blankets. Bunks are sometimes covered with dry grass. Some families have acquired single size camp mattresses from construction camps. In daytime, when people sleep on the ground in cabins or tents, the bedding is rolled into a huge roll and stored in the rear of the dwelling where it becomes a backrest for the occupants.

In winter, spruce brush is laid in front of the entrance to a cabin or tent frame, or a burlap bag is thrown immediately inside the door of a house. Here a person scrapes the snow from his moccasins before the warmth of the building causes the melting snow to wet his footwear.

Cabins with floors are swept every day or so with a broom. New brush is laid in tents and floorless cabins about once every two weeks, the old branches being discarded. Every fall cabins are rechinked where necessary and additional sod may be piled on the shallow spots of a dirt roof. Heavy snow is removed from the roof of a sod cabin and from the tops of tents. Cleaning and chinking are done by women, while a man keeps the roof in repair. If tents burn or otherwise become damaged, a woman takes down the shelter and sews a new piece of canvas into the damaged area.

Mice are household pests. Dwellings often contain mousetraps, most of which are of native manufacture. To make a mousetrap, a man takes a piece of wood, fifteen inches long,

[1] Griffin, *Alaska and the Canadian Northwest* (1944), 339.

1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

and carefully whittles it to a smooth round surface. About seven inches from either end he 356
tacks a piece of cardboard or tin, about three inches long and two inches wide. This makes 224
a narrow platform. On one edge of this platform a bit of bait, such as rice or bacon rind, is placed. The stick is then fitted into holes cut in the sides of a four gallon oil can, from which the top has been cut away, and about half filled with water. A mouse running out along the stick to reach the bait must step on the platform. The weight of the animal causes the platform to upset plunging the mouse into the water. When the trap failed to reduce the mice in his house, Old Man one night tried to shoot these pests with a .22 rifle. He placed a little rice for bait on top of a ridge pole. Hearing a mouse approach the food his wife focused a flashlight in the direction of the animal. The mouse froze in the glare of light and old Man tried to shoot the thief. His eyesight was too poor, however, for him to kill any mice in this way.

Nonresidential buildings. A few nonresidential structures are built or used by the In- 343
dians. Such buildings include latrines, caches, and bunkhouses.

Latrines are not common. They are not built while the people live in Lower Post but 343
are sometimes found around the home cabins. Little care is taken in their construction. 514
They may be constructed with a piece of canvas over a frame of poles or they may be built of log walls covered with canvas like a tent frame. Old Man dug a latrine and covered it with an old mosquito tent. He was about the only member of his family to use the structure.

A cache is found near every home cabin and is designed to afford protection to winter 343
food stores from mice and bears. The simplest type is a platform made of two inch wide 251
poles; it is about five feet square and rests on four posts, three or four inches in diameter and eight feet high. The goods to be cached are placed on the platform and covered with a tarp which is then tied down. More substantial caches are rectangular walled structures, about six feet wide, seven feet long, and five feet high, erected on a platform of heavy spruce poles. The platform itself rests on posts raised about ten feet from the ground. The walls of the cache are built of spruce poles, four or five inches in diameter, and fitted with a pole and dirt covered gable roof. A ladder is used to mount to the narrow platform left in front of the cache, while entrance is through a narrow opening about four feet high. The poles supporting a cache have strips of tin, ten or twelve inches wide, obtained from four gallon oil cans, nailed around them about halfway from the ground. The smooth surface of the metal prevents mice from climbing the poles.

Bunkhouses are not specially constructed but consist of cabins or tent frames which 343
were abandoned after a new dwelling was constructed. Such shelters are sometimes used in winter by visitors to a settlement and contain little more than a stove. Guests provide their [574]
own bedding and kitchen utensils. Any unoccupied dwelling may also be used as a workshop for winter carpentering and skin work.

When Mrs. Moss, a Slave Indian, first came to Old Man's settlement, she built a "tipi," such as she had been familiar with in her own country across the mountains. She utilized this structure as a workhouse and cookhouse, the open fire permitting the broiling of meat. The construction was described as a circle of closely placed poles covered with moss and dirt, and with an opening at the top for a smokehole.

Settlements. The semi-permanent winter settlement consists of a family's caches, home- 361